

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicants would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the acknowledgment of Applicants Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449, and for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Claim for Priority and receipt of copies of the certified copies of the priority documents (i.e., in the National Stage Application).

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-8 will have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 9-18 will have been added. Claims 9-18 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

Objections to the Drawings, Abstract, Specification and Claims

In the Official Action, the Examiner objected to Figures 4 and 5 of the drawings for not being designated with a --Prior Art-- label. In this regard, Applicants submit that Figures 4 and 5 have been amended to include a --Prior Art-- label. Accordingly, the above-noted objection is believed to be moot and should be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, the Examiner objected to the abstract for being in a two-paragraph format and because the text “---” contained in the abstract was not understood. In this regard, Applicants have submitted a replacement abstract with the accompanying response in order to address the Examiner's concerns. Accordingly, the objection to the abstract is believed to be moot and should be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has objected to the specification because of the occurrences of the text “---” through out the specification. Applicants, submit that the specification has been amended, where appropriate, to address the Examiner’s concerns. In particular, the Specification has been amended to remove the text “---”. Accordingly, the objection to the Specification is believed to be moot and should be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has suggested minor claim amendments to improve the clarity of the claims. Applicants submit that the Examiner’s suggested claim amendment to claim 1 is moot since this claim has been canceled by the present Amendment.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicants submit that the above-noted rejections of these claims are believed to be moot since claims 1-8 have been canceled by the present Amendment. Nevertheless, to the extent that newly-added claims 9-18 recite features somewhat similar to canceled claims 1-8, Applicants have presented these claims with the Examiner’s comments in mind.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by KU et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,652,624), and the Examiner rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over KU.

Applicants submit that the above-noted rejections of these claims are believed to be moot since claims 1-8 have been canceled by the present Amendment. Nevertheless, to the extent that newly-added claims 9-18 recite features somewhat similar to canceled claims 1-8, Applicants respectfully traverse the above-noted rejections.

In this regard, Applicants submit KU (alone or in any properly reasoned combination) does not disclose at least the combination of features recited in independent claim 9.

In particular, claim 9 sets forth a jet dispersing device including: a high pressure region having a flow inlet; a low pressure region having a flow outlet; a partition wall positioned within the high pressure region such that the high pressure region is partitioned from the low pressure region, wherein the partition wall has at least one nozzle hole configured to jet a liquid from the high pressure region to the low pressure region such that the liquid is dispersed as fine particles, and wherein the partition wall has a cleaning fluid communication port having an opening area which is larger than an opening area of the at least one nozzle hole; and a valve mechanism configured to open and close the cleaning fluid communication port.

Applicants submit KU lacks any disclosure of at least the above-noted combination of elements.

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner indicates that element 28 of KU is considered to be equivalent to the presently claimed partition wall, and that the pressure region 30 is considered to be equivalent to the presently claimed high pressure region.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, Applicants submit that the present invention is very different structurally from the device of KU. More specifically, Applicants submit that KU discloses element 28 (*which the Examiner asserts to be equivalent to the presently claimed partition wall*) surrounding and defining the chamber 30 (*which the Examiner asserts to be equivalent to the presently claimed high-pressure region*) [see, figure 2 of KU]. Thus, Applicants submit that KU does not disclose at least the presently claimed partition wall positioned within the high pressure region such that the high pressure region is partitioned from the low pressure region, as generally recited in independent claim 9.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claim 9 (as well as claims 10-18 depending therefrom) is patentable over the applied prior art.

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, Applicants submit that independent claim 9 is allowable. With regard to dependent claims 10-18, Applicants assert that these claims are allowable on their own merit, as well as because of their dependencies from claim 9.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

SUMMARY

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request an indication to that effect. Applicants has argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out deficiencies of the applied reference. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants note that this amendment is being made merely to more clearly recite the presently claimed invention and to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this paper, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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